



CHARLOTTE TEMPLE

A HISTORICAL DRAMA

THREE ACTS, WITH PROLOGUE

DRAMATIZED BY
HARRIET PIXLEY PLUMB



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DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

Capt. Robert Montraville - - - - of the British Army.
Lieut. Belcour, - - - - - of the British Army.
Major Buckingham, - - - - - of the British Army.
Col. Clayton, - - - - - of the British Army.
Barker, - - - - - Butler to Col. Clayton.
Mr. Temple - - - - - A younger son of a nobleman.
Charlotte Temple, - - - - - Daughter of Mr. Temple.
Mlle. La Rue, - French governess at Mme. Du Pont's school.
Miss Gushington, - - - - - A teacher at the school.
Miss Franklyn, - - - - - - - - An heiress.
Miss Mayfair, - - - - - Guest at Col. Clayton's.
Soldiers, citizens, etc.

Time: 1774—1775.

Loci:—Prologue, Chichester, England.

Acts 1, 2 and 3, New York and vicinity.



REMARKS.

As the action of this drama occurs in the year 1774, the costumes and stage-settings should correspond. The ladies, when in evening dress, wearing low-necked, short-waisted, clinging gowns. Hair powdered. Charlotte Temple, being a young girl, should be gowned in white, clinging goods low-necked, short-waisted, wearing a ribbon tied in front. Sleeves short and puffed. Hair worn in long curls. White stockings and black slippers. The soldiers in full regimentals, with powdered hair.

The drawing-room should be furnished with Chippendale furniture, and rugs, also a spinet.

PROLOGUE.

Grounds of young ladies' seminary—The encounter and interview—A wily woman—Almost saved—The elopement.

ACT I.

Home of Charlotte Temple near New York—"Why don't he come?"—The trail of the serpent—The letter—A false friend and designing villain—The return—Treachery—"Kill me, but don't doubt my fidelity"—The desertion—The traitor scorned—Driven from the cottage—Out in the storm.

ACT II.

Mrs. Clayton's drawing-room—Palmistry—The minuet—The letter—"I implore you to give me shelter from the storm"—The repulse—The recognition—The appeal, "Save me, or I perish."

ACT III.

Miss Gushington's apartments—Dreaming of home and mother—A father's blessing—The duel—The betrayer's remorse—Death of Charlotte.

PROLOGUE.

(Exterior of Mme. Du Pont's school at Chichester, England. Broken stone wall at rear over which vines clamber. Trees at back of wall and scene painted on drop representing seminary some little distance back. Scene on stage represents an English road. Stone seat R. C. Stump of tree L. C. Large iron gate L. C. in wall, showing walk leading to seminary. Captain Montraville, Belcour, and Major Buckingham discovered lounging about, dressed in full regiments. Laughter as curtain rises.)

Belcour—Why is it that a man, usually brave, is generally afraid of a woman?

Mont.—Is he?

Bel.—Well, there's Major Buckingham. He seems more frightened at the rustle of petticoats than at the roar of cannon.

Maj. B.—Youngster, a cannon is a death-dealing instrument of war, while a woman is—

Bel. (laughing)—A dangerous instrument, even in peace.

Mont. (dreamily)—Most men love danger; it gives zest to life.

Bel.—Without women what would life be worth?

Mont.—A puff of smoke, a bullet—then oblivion.

Maj. B.—Stuff, nonsense! Life would be far happier without them, unless they were like the cannon I mentioned, and put an end to misery instead of being the beginning of it.

Mont. (laughing)—Ah, Major, you know you like to look at pretty women.

Maj. B.—Through my spy-glass—yes.

Mont.—And to talk with them.

Maj. B.—No, sir; no! What can a woman talk about? What do women know of the "Wars of the Roses," of Richard the Lion-hearted, of musket-drill, or court-martial?

Bel.—And what does the Major know of duchess lace, real Sevres ware, Dutch linen, or old Delit?

Maj. B.—Paf—not worth knowing about.

Mont. (who has risen)—Come, come, Major; you know you are artistic. Now, for comparison, what is more beautiful than yonder picture? (Stands on stone seat and points beyond the wall.) Shepherdesses, sylphs, call them what you will—goddesses of Elysia—beautiful!

Maj. B. (looking with interest)—To my way of thinking they are more like vast expense accounts to their luckless fathers. If they had all been boys—

Bel.—They could all join the King's Guards!

Maj. B.—That would be worth while.

Mont.—But you will admit, Major, that this is a goodly sight?

Maj. B. (seriously)—Come, come, Captain Montraville, this is a dangerous pastime. Truly you have not lost your heart to one of these playthings?

Mont.—Perhaps I have. Who knows?

Maj. B.—Montraville, a good soldier never makes love on the eve of battle. Better let your thoughts dwell on the future.

Mont.—I am doing so. What man's future does not include the future of some fair woman? (Major coughs.) Excepting you, Major, of course.

Maj. B.—It is well that you added that last sentence; but remember, my boy, these young ladies are not old enough to judge wisely; they are school-misses merely—children—one might say. If you wish to comport yourselves with honor, you will turn your faces toward Portsmouth and order, "March!" Well, I will leave you—it does no good to moralize. I must make my five miles every day, or I'll get too demmed fat to run after those Yankees when they retreat. (Montraville is looking over wall.) Captain Montraville, about!—face!

Mont. (laughing)—I cannot; I'm a prisoner in the hands of the enemy.

Maj. B. (with contempt)—God save the army from petticoat rule. (Exit L. 2 E. Montraville gets down.)

Bel.—Montraville, so you are really in earnest about making that girl your wife?

Mont.—Why should I not? Is she not the sweetest girl in the world? I'm in earnest for I really love her, Belcour. Every glance of her eyes only welds the chain stronger and makes her a part of my existence.

Bel.—The dominant part, my dear Montraville, making her woes your woes, her joys your beatification.

Mont.—She is my very heart! Oh, Belcour, the thought of leaving her here while I must journey to America is most distracting.

Bel.—Take her with you. If she loves you she will go. Here is an opportunity to put her love to the test.

Mont.—She loves me. No truer heart ever beat in the breast of woman.

Bel.—You're a strange fellow—I should say, a madman. Now if you would love like a rational being such as I—

Mont. (laughing)—You! Why, Belcour, you never loved in your life.

Bel.—Egad, your tone is not flattering, Montraville. Ah, here she comes. (Looks off into grounds.)

Mont.—At last!

Bel.—Isn't she a fascinating creature! So guileless and sweet!

Mont. (sighing)—Darkness lifts the sable mantle from my heart, and the sunshine of rapture falls upon it. My love comes.

Bel.—By my faith, I believe you have an appointment with her. I will leave you to her tender care. Hush, the fair Ophelia comes. So young, so fair, so innocent! I will vanish. Adieu. (Mont. pretends to draw his sword, or makes a sword of his cane in play, and Belcour, laughing, exit hastily B. 2. E.)

Mont.—What shall I say to her now that she is here. The heart should have a tongue to speak its love. What poor interpreters are the lips to translate the mystic language of the heart. I cannot leave her—I will not! She must go with me! Let them disinherit me—disown me! Charlotte shall be my riches; in her dear arms I shall find Paradise! (Turning around he discovers Miss Gushington approaching instead of Charlotte. Surprised and disgusted he remarks)—I expected an angel, and a spectre appears.

Enter Miss Gushington reading from a book.

Gush.—“My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words,
Of thy tongue's utterings, yet I know the sound,
Art thou not a Romeo and a Montague?”

Mont. (aside)—A love-lorn maid reading “Romeo!” There is a significance in those words, for am I not a “Romeo?” (Appearing before her and replying in the words of Romeo.) “Neither, fair creature, if either thee dislike.”

(Miss Gushington startled, but replies)—“How cam'st thou hither—and wherefore?”

Mont.—“With love's light wing did I o'er perch these walls.” But pardon me, I have disturbed your reverie.

Miss G.—Not at all, Captain Montraville. I am delighted to have met you.

Mont.—You compliment me. I am your humble servant.

Miss G.—You dear soldiers, have you not a right to compliments, for who so daring in love and war as you?

Mont.—Especially Major Buckingham.

Miss G.—Oh, Captain Montraville!

Mont.—You need not hide your blushes, Miss Gushington. I know whereof I speak. The Major will feel deeply the loss of your charming society.

Miss G.—Do you think so?

Mont.—I know so.

Miss G.—Oh, you dear man! But is not your departure quite sudden? The Major did not remark it at the military ball the last time I saw him.

Mont.—He could not bear to speak of it, but he is dying for a glimpse of you. He has been here all the evening, hop-

ing you would come this way. Only a few moments ago he left me to try to walk off his impatience.

Miss G.—Oh, the dear man, which way did he go?

Mont.—Straight up the road.

Miss G. (desperately)—He must not depart without bidding me goodby. (Starts L.) Captain Montraville, do you know that I have a brother in America?

Mont.—Indeed?

Miss G. (sighing)—And I haven't seen him for ten years. How glad he would be to have me visit him! But I must hasten. Adieu, Captain, I must see the Major. (Exit L.)

Mont. (laughing)—If she can catch up with Major Buckie when he's walking to reduce avoirdupois, she's a better pedestrian than I am. (Walks restlessly up and down.) Why doesn't Charlotte come? Ought I to ask her to marry a penniless devil of a soldier who may fall in the first fight and leave her a widow in a strange land? Why disturb the happy present with painful speculations on the future? I have Charlotte's love. Yes, that is mine. (Enter Mlle. La Rue through gate. Mademoiselle, you bring word from Charlotte, I know. Why does she not come? I have been waiting for ages; so it seems to me.

La Rue (laughing lightly)—(With accent)—How you do magnify time. Well, you must wait for ages still. She will not come.

Mont. (staggered)—Not come! Surely she will not let me depart without one good-by?

La Rue—No, she sends you dis. You will understand. Read.

Mont. (taking note from her)—(Reads)—"Montraville, forgive me, for I cannot say good-by. It would break my heart. Try to forget me, and be happy in the New World.—Charlotte." Oh, God! (Sinks on stone seat.)

La Rue—And you will let her sign her own death-warrant. For I tell you, Captain Montraville, if she go not wiz you she will die. I know her—she has ze sensitive nature zat will pine away and die of a broken heart.

Mont.—And mine will break, too. I must see her, La Rue. I shall remain here until I do.

La Rue—Zat is right. If you vill be firm and insist upon seeing her, she vill come. I know her; she love you like a religion. You are ze zun zat rises in ze morning, and also ze moon zat rises at night. You are her universe. Body and soul—she is yours.

Mont.—And body and soul I am hers! What shall I do? Loves drives reason from the head, "For love that gives wit to fools, makes fools of wits."

La Rue.—You want my assistance?

Mont.—Yes, Mademoiselle. You know what art attracts a woman most.

La Rue—Ah, Monsieur, I would aid you if I could, but I am a poor girl. My only means of livelihood is Madame's school. If I do anysing to lose my position, what zen can I do?

Mont.—If, through any favor to me, you lose your position, you shall not suffer. Here—to show you my good faith, accept this slight token of my esteem. (Gives her a diamond ring from his finger.)

La Rue (with a cry of delight)—Oh, a diamond! I do love ze diamonds, Captain Montraville. You are a prince of generosity.

Mont. (lightly)—A trifle—only aid me to win Charlotte, and you shall be repaid well. Go, dear friend; bring her to me, and I will never forget the service.

La Rue—How can I refuse ze generous Captain anyzing. Go you away from here so she will not see you. Return in fifteen minutes and she will be on zis spot. Go now—quick.

Mont.—How can I thank you?

La Rue (looking at ring)—Ah, you have thanked me very well. Only be patient. Charlotte is yours. Go! Some one comes. (Exit Montraville hastily R. as Belcour enters L.)

Bel.—Mademoiselle, why do you send the handsome Captain away so hastily? Am I de trop?

La Rue—Foolish fellow! You zink I care for ze Captain? I send him away to wait for Charlotte, when I bring her here.

Bel.—Gad! Love! Hasn't he seen her yet?

La Rue—She will not come. She say she feel somezing is going to happen. Well, I bring her—zat is going to happen. (Laughs.)

Bel.—So the little simpleton is afraid to say good-by to her lover?

La Rue (smiling)—Ah, you leave her to me. I vill make her change her mind.

Bel.—She has faith in you?

La Rue—More zan zat. I have power over her. Her will is weak; mine is strong. She does whatever I say—besides she loves and where love leads ze footsteps follow.

Bel.—Is it love that leads you to me, Mademoiselle? (Affectionately.)

La Rue—Pah, do not make love to me. I hate sentimental nonsense. You know why I come, and why I go across ze sea wiz you. I am truthful. It is because I am ambitious and because I am seeek of being only Mlle. La Rue, teacher of French in Madame Du Pont's select seminary for

young ladies. Pah! I am too good for such a life.

Bel.—You're not very flattering, surely.

La Rue—Zat is why I am sharning. Do you not know zer is a certain charm in brazen truth? You love me because I tell you frankly I love you not. Is it not so?

Bel.—I think it is because you are so beautiful, Mademoiselle.

La Rue (laughing)—Don't! You are not sincere. I am not beautiful.

Bel.—To me you are far more beautiful than that milk and water baby, Charlotte Temple, for whom Montraville makes such a fool of himself.

La Rue—Oh, why trouble yourself to lie. You know she is pretty. Be truthful once.

Bel. (angrily)—You are the most disagreeable woman I ever knew.

La Rue—Now you are sharning. I love to see you in a temper.

Bel.—I doubt if I can agree with any one of your temper.

La Rue—Oh, we will agree like turtle-doves if you will be truthful and will not flatter.

Bel.—You shall have the truth to your heart's content, *ma belle*. It is growing late. The time for our departure is near at hand. You must not go without Charlotte, for Montraville will be a devilish poor traveling-companion if she does not go. What is to be done?

La Rue—You go quickly and bring a chaise with fast horses. When the moon comes up to yonder spire, drive up to zis gate. Leave ze rest to me. (The moon has been seen to rise through the tree-tops, and is now almost to the spire on the school building.) Now go.

Bel.—And Montraville?

La Rue—He is not fur. Go quickly.

Bel.—Depend upon me. (Exit B.)

La Rue (meditatively)—My star must rise if Charlotte's falls. In America no one will know me. Ze past vill be completely hidden, and I shall no longer be ze poor school-teacher. I am still a handsome woman, even as Belcour says. And he, ze fool, zinks he is ze oak on vich I vill lean. No, he is only ze branch. (Looks often to the B.) Why he return? No, it is Montraville. No, a stranger. Ah, it is Charlotte Temple's father. Why comes he here now—now of all ze times. I must see him—I must know!

(Enter Mr. Temple acting as if he had lost his way.)

Mr. Temple (seeing La Rue)—Pardon me, madam, I believe I have lost my way. This is the entrance to Madame Du Pont's school is it not?

La Rue—Through zat gate, sir. But pardon! you, I be-

lieve, are Mr. Temple, our dear Charlotte's father, is it not so?

Mr. Temple—I am. And you—

La Rue—I am Mademoiselle La Rue, teacher of French in Madame's seminary. Ah, such a lovely girl is Charlotte Temple. You may well be proud of her.

Mr. T.—Such praise from one of her teachers is very sweet to those who love her, believe me.

La Rue—Those who love her! Who does not love her?

Mr. T.—She is a good child.

La Rue—I hope you do not bring ill news, sir.

Mr. T.—Glad news for Charlotte. As to-morrow is the anniversary of the happy day that gave her to us, I have come to take her home that she may spend it with us.

La Rue—Take her away?

Mr. T.—Only for to-morrow. I hope Madame will not object.

La Rue—Surely not. You will go right up ze path to ze right, zen to ze left, and you find your way zere to ze front-door. (Mr. Temple lifts his hat and goes in through gate.) Ze path I show him, take him not to the front-door. She must not see her father. (Exit P.)

(Enter Major Buckingham followed by Miss Gushington L.)

Miss G.—Do wait, Major. How fast you walk! (Sighs.)

Maj. B. (with rising inflection)—Do I?

Miss G.—I am quite out of breath, but fortunately I have overtaken you.

Maj. B. (with falling inflection)—Indeed!

Miss G.—I couldn't think of letting you go so far away without saying good-by. (Sighs.)

Maj. B.—Indeed!

Miss G.—Indeed I could not.

Maj. B.—Really?

Miss G.—We shall miss you dreadfully.

Maj. B.—Indeed!

Miss G. (aside)—Why doesn't he say something? (Sentimentally.) In fact, I scarcely know what we shall do when our brave soldier boys are gone.

Maj. B. (gruffly)—Really?

Miss G. (giggling and half crying at same time)—I think we shall all die of broken hearts.

Maj. B. (with sarcasm)—Really!

Miss G.—You seem to have lost your tongue, Major.

Maj. B.—Indeed?

Miss G. (coolly)—Surely you have something to say to me before you go?

Maj. B.—Really—

Miss G.—Or do you mean to forget us all and—

Maj. B.—Truly!

Miss G.—Ungracious man, will you forget your friends so soon?

Maj. B.—No! I—

Miss G. (quickly)—Oh, you dear man, you don't know how happy you have made me.

Maj. B. (embarrassed)—Nonsense, I—

Miss G.—Yes, you have. If you only knew how highly we regard you—

Maj. B.—Yes?

Miss G. (as bell rings within)—Oh, that cruel bell! Is it so late? It tells the moment of our parting. I must go or Madame will scold me for breaking her rules. But don't think you have lost us for good. I may take a trip to America. You know I have a brother—

Maj. B.—Indeed!

Miss G. (sighing with impatience)—Yes, indeed! In America. (Sweetly) so we may meet again very, very soon, and this may not be good-by, but only au revoir. Just au revoir.

Major B. (gruffly)—Good-by!

Miss G.—“Parting is such sweet sorrow that I could say good-by until it were to-morrow.” Good-by, dear soldier Romeo. “None but the brave deserve the fair.” (Flirts with him from the gate and exit into the grounds.)

Maj. B. (jamming his hat over his eyes)—Heaven be praised! (Enter Belcour and Montraville as he exits to B.)

Bel.—Ah, Major, that's the time we caught you, ha, ha, ha.

Maj. B.—Go to the devil! (Exit R. L. E.)

Mont.—Belcour, if you were not my friend I should kill you for suggesting a thing like that to me. Her honor is my honor; she goes as my wife, or she remains here pure in her virginity.

Bel.—It's because I am your friend that I would save you from a union, the outcome of which can only result in misery for you both.

Mont.—Stop! Friendship is not friendship that wounds the heart and would rob a man of his honor and a woman of her fair name.

Bel.—It is useless to talk to a man who hears only with his heart. She is not your peer; I would say “God's blessing” on the union if she were.

Mont.—An honest woman is any man's peer.

Bel.—To such a woman I bow. The hairs that adorn the heads of my married friends make me fear I shall never bend my head to women.

Mont.—Do not cause theirs to bend, and yours must bend in homage.

Bel.—Splendid sentiment, Montraville. But yonder comes the lovely Charlotte. Remember the future; do nothing you will regret. (Exit.)

Mont.—So long as there is honor in the act, there should be no regret. (Steps aside to observe Charlotte unseen.)

(Enter Charlotte with a flower in her hand.)

Char.—Dear little flower, tell me a secret. (Pulling petals.) "He loves me—he loves me not. He loves me—he loves me—"

Mont. (coming to her side)—Charlotte! He loves thee!

Char. (wavering and finally yielding to his impassioned glance)—Montraville! (Throws herself into his arms.)

Mont.—And would you have permitted me to depart without one word of farewell?

Char.—My heart said farewell to you; I dared not trust my lips. (Drawing away from him.)

Mont.—Ah, love! My heart's yearnings for you brought you to me, altho' you would have me go with misery in my heart; the light of happiness gone forever from my life.

Char.—Think you the sun shines upon my life, when darkness falls upon yours? You have no faith in my love.

Mont.—Say not so, Charlotte. You are all the joys of life to me. When I leave my native land, a few weeks may terminate my existence; the perils of the ocean, the dangers of war may separate us eternally.

Char.—No, no, my love. You will come back to me—Heaven is kind, not cruel.

Mont.—My God, Charlotte, you do not know how madly I love you! I cannot go without you, Charlotte! Be mine, my wife!

Char.—No, Montraville, our parents could never consent to our union. You would be disinherited, while mine think of me as a child.

Mont. (bitterly)—And I had flattered myself that I was dearer to you than all the world. I thought for my sake you would brave the dangers of the ocean, that by your affection for me the hardships of my life abroad would be softened; that your sweet tenderness would cheer the hour of death, and perhaps smooth my passage to another world. A few short hours ago I was filled with ambition, hope—now life possesses no charm for me. I care not what awaits me to-morrow!

Char.—Hush, hush, Montraville, have I not sworn to you that I love you better than mother, father, home, life itself? But my duty is religion to me. I must not hear you further. Though our hearts break, you must bid me farewell, and perhaps when you return—

Mont. (desperately)—Return! I shall never return; Something tells me that if we part now, it is forever.

Char.—Don't deprive me of the little strength I have. Go, Montraville, go, and may God bless and protect you! (Calls.) Mademoiselle La Rue! Let Rue come take me away! (Staggered to La Rue, who now enters, and falls almost fainting into her arms.)

La Rue.—Charlotte, you are foolish. You will die if you part like this from the man you love. There will be no wrong in going with Captain Montraville, but I will make one grand sacrifice for you. I WILL GO WITH YOU.

Mont.—And I swear to you, Charlotte, we will be married the moment we land. You can write a letter to your parents, and when the war is over we will return for their blessing.

Char. (arousing herself)—I must do my duty. My parents would not forgive me if I left them thus. It cannot be. (Weakens again.)

La Rue.—Captain Montraville, a mistaken sense of duty has ruined many a life's happiness. Do you think it is right for you to part when it makes her like this?

Mont.—She is right; she has brought me to my senses. She is a brave girl, and I am a coward. (Charlotte lifts her head.) Charlotte, farewell! You are right. There can be no happiness in such a departure. (Embraces her, then turns to depart.)

Char. (Aside).—Oh, God, how can I let him go!

(Enter Belcour with chaise which pauses R. C.)

Mont.—I am a soldier, Charlotte, and surely must not be less courageous in my duty than you, brave girl.

Char.—I cannot bear it! Oh, why did we ever meet, and why does my heart break?

Belcour (joining La Rue)—Come, let us leave them. I have poured poison into his mind which will do its deadly work.

La Rue (to Belcour)—I have made her as submissive as a kitten. She will go to America.

Bel.—Montraville, time flies! (Belcour and La Rue go toward chaise.)

Mont.—Farewell! (Embrace.) Death has no sting like this.

(Starts toward chaise.)

Char. (With a heart-broken cry).—Montraville, do not leave me! I will go with you to death if you wish it.

Mont.—My Charlotte! Our hearts shall not break.

Char.—It is heaven's wish, my love!

Voice without.—Charlotte, Charlotte!

Mr. Temple (without).—Charlotte, my child!

Char.—My father!

Bel.—Quick, into the chaise!

Mont.—Come Charlotte, come!

Char.—No, no, Montraville, my father calls me. (Starts R.)

Mont. (with great feeling)—Your husband calls you, too.

Char. (wavering)—Oh, Heaven, which way? Which way? (Staggeres and falls into a swoon.)

Bel. (lifting her and placing her in Montraville's arms.)—Montraville, fate favors you. She is yours.

Mont. (hesitates, then takes her in his arms and kisses her)—My love, my life!

CURTAIN.

2nd picture.—La Rue and Belcour in chaise; Montraville with Charlotte in his arms, and one foot on lower step as if about to get in.

SECOND CURTAIN.

Chaise gone—Mr. Temple seen alone on stage.

ACT I.

Scene.—Charlotte's home in New York. Furnished in the colonial style and showing a fair summer landscape without. Seven months are supposed to have elapsed. On table L. C. is a work-basket containing Charlotte's sewing. A large mirror L. C. Books on shelf or in book-case R. La Rue discovered at mirror putting a white rose in her hair. Belcour enters and pauses in doorway as curtain rises.

Bel.—How lovely! But beauty needs no adoring.

La Rue (turning).—You here, Lieutenant Belcour! I thought I told you not to come again, did I not?

Bel. (nochalantly)—So you did, Mademoiselle, but men always do what they are forbidden. My audacity is only a tribute to your charms.

La Rue.—You are falling again into your old habits. A bad sign. Why do you not stay away ven I vish you not to come.

Bel.—How can I remain away? You know I love you. Life without you is eternal darkness, and I am a plant that craves the sunshine of your eyes. Have pity upon me and take me to your heart again—that flexible heart which has housed so many tenants!

LaRue.—Monsieur, you insult me!

Bel.—You do not understand me.

La Rue.—Only too well. Unless you stay away I shall appeal to Captain Montraville.

Bel.—Is he now your admirer. Do tell me. I fancy neither yor nor Charlotte will see much more of him. The Captain has awakened from his dream of love. His love was too vehement to last long.

La Rue.—But he will not desert Charlotte.

Bel.—Oh, no, he will probably send her home.

La Rue.—Send her home! And vat vill he do?

Bel.—Well, if straws point the right way, he will marry Miss Franklyn.

La Rue.—Then he does not intend to marry Charlotte?

Bel.—With beauty and fortune at his feet, he would be a fool indeed.

La Rue.—And he prefers to be a scoundrel.

Bel.—How hard you are on Montraville! When we poor men are inconstant you call us scoundrels, while we only call you coquettes.

La Rue.—We only cause you pain, you bring dishonor.

Bel.—A woman's cry to extenuate her follies. You cannot reproach me; I have been true to you.

La Rue.—You have forgotten ze promise you made ven we left England.

Bel.—No, but you have forgotten yours.

La Rue.—It is a woman's privilege to better her condition.

Bel.—It must be, for she never fails to accept an opportunity. Alas, poor me—a discarded glove—a love worn out!

La Rue.—Your presence annoys me. I vill zank you to you come here no more.

Bel.—Sorry I cannot oblige you.

La Rue (angrily).—I vill also zank you to go now—at once.

Bel.—Sorry to be disoblighing. My visit to-day is to the lovely Charlotte; I am her guest—not yours. By the way, have you noticed how deucedly good-looking Miss Temple is growing. She does not seem very happy, but egad!—sorrow becomes her.

La Rue.—Good looking! brown cheeks. Hollow eyes half the time running over wiz tears. Is zat ze bait to capture a man?

Bel.—I believe it is. Try it on the Colonel.

La Rue.—Mind your business. Zat is my affair, and I do as I like. If you came to see Charlotte, you will find her in ze garden.

Bel. (going up).—Thank you. Pardon me, that white rose does not become you. You should wear yellow.

La Rue.—Vat do you mean, sair?

Bel.—White roses mean purity, you know. Yellow——

La Rue.—Oh, you wretch!

(Exit Belcour laughing, D. C.)

La Rue.—Zere is no gallantry in zese Englishmen. In France, ah, in France ve have gentlemen. So Montraville is tired of Charlotte. I know what zat means. And I shall not be dragged down wiz her. I must be very careful to-day. Zis is ze last chance I shall have to make my grand coup d'etat. I must bring all my batteries to bear on ze gallant Colo-

nel. He is rich and can give me the social position I have long dreamed of.

(Enter Col. Clayton with a large bouquet of yellow roses, which he presents to her.)

Col. C.—Mademoiselle, permit me—

La Rue (joyfully)—Yellow roses! How beautiful! (Aside.) I could almost believe Belcour sent zem. (Aloud.) I zank you!

Col. C.—I tried to get white or red ones, but they were all gone. There are becoming. I like yellow roses for dark people.—I mean brunettes. But what is wrong? You're not yourself?

La Rue (pretending to cry)—Oh, do not question me.

Col. C.—But something is amiss. I hope I have a right to ask.

La Rue (drying her eyes)—Do you zink I nevair have sad thoughts, Col. Clayton?

Col. C.—You with sad thoughts! They never should find an abiding place in your bosom; and you seemed so light-hearted. Come, my child, confide in me. Believe me, I am your best friend.

La Rue.—How good you are! Could I have such a fazer as you to guide me, I nevair would have been persuaded to embark for zis strange land wiz ze care of Charlottle Temple, who, I soon learned, used me as a cloak for her shame

Col. C.—It is possible that you were deceived?

La Rue.—Heartlessly deceived. I believed Charlotte and Montraville were man and wife, and my position in zis house is ruining my reputation. I believe I shall soon be left by zese people to ze mercies of ze world. I am lost unless I can leave zis place at once; but where—where can I go?

Col. C.—Why, dem it, girl, this is shameful! How dare those people make a dupe of a good girl? I'll have that cur, Montraville, reduced to the ranks!

La Rue.—Do not blame Montraville. He, too, is a victim.

Col. C.—But that girl looks so innocent, so sweet!

La Rue.—It is such who are capable of ze most mischief. Oh, vat shall I do, and vere shall I go?

Col. C.—Go with me! I'll take you away from this place and put you where you will be free from all want and worry.

La Rue (offended)—Sair, I am not a Charlotte Temple!

Col. C.—Heaven forbid that you should be. I'll marry you! To-day, at once, this very hour.

La Rue.—Marry me! Make me your wife! Ah, how noble you are! No wonder I love you! Oh, vat have I said!

Col. C.—Said? Why you said you loved me. What else should you say to your husband that is to be? Just say it

again. Why, dem it, I've been loving you till me heart goes like a hammer.

La Rue.—Oh, Col. Clayton, how can you love me?

Col. C.—How can I help loving you?

La Rue.—But I am only a poor girl, a school-teacher, a drudge. I am not fit to be your wife.

Col. C.—Let me be the judge of that. I have wealth enough for both. You shall be surrounded with every luxury money can buy if you will only say you'll have me.

La Rue.—Gladly will I be your wife— but I may be misjudged. My position here may cause one to remark. Indeed, Lieutenant Belcour has insulted me more zan once.

Col. C.—Let Belcour or any person make unpleasant remarks about my wife! I should like to hear them!

(Enter Belcour and Charlotte D. C.)

Char.—Col. Clayton!

Bel. (to Charlotte)—What did I tell you!

Col. C.—I suppose I am welcome?

Char.—You are more than welcome.

Col. C. (coldly)—Perhaps not so welcome when I tell you I am conspiring to take your companion away. Mlle. La Rue has promised to become my wife.

Char.—Your wife! (Looks from one to the other.) Belcour laughs softly to himself and goes down L. C. twirling his moustache.)

Col. C.—It seems to surpirse you!

Char.—It is very sudden, and I thought—(Checking herself.)

Col. C.—Nevertheless, it is true. Henceforth this lady's honor is mine, (to Belcour) and should any one presume to speak disrespectfully of her I shall not hesitate to hold him to account.

Bel. (bowing very low and with ridiculous gravity)—Permit me to wish Mlle. much joy. Colonel, you need never be apprehensive of any one throwing odium on the character of your lady. (To La Rue.) The spider has her fly safely in her net. What pretty yellow roses! (Goes up.)

La Rue (biting her lip)—What a miserable wretch!

Char. (to the Colonel)—Your fortune is my loss. God grant you may both be happy! (Goes to kiss La Rue, who turns coldly away.)

La Rue.—I zank you!

Char. (staggered)—Oh, God!

Col. C.—It may not entirely conform with the rules of society, but circumstances urge me to take Mlle. away at once. She needs my protection!—therefore we shall be married to-day.

La Rue (joyfully)—I will get my belongings at once. (Exit to left.)

Col. C.—The quicker the better.

Char.—Can I help you, Mademoiselle?

La Rue.—No, I thank you—I prefer not. (Sneeringly.) You remain here and entertain Lieutenant Belcour. (Charlotte sinks into seat again and La Rue exit L.)

Col. C.—Demmed if I ain't sorry for her. Miss Temple—

Char. (turning)—Col. Clayton.

Col. C. (embarrassed)—I hope you are not ill.

Char. (smiling sadly)—No, I am quite well. As well as I can ever hope to be.

Col. C. (Aside)—This is a devilish ticklish position for a man to be in. Er—Lient. Belcour, do you smoke?

Bel.—Very little.

Col. C.—They say it is injurious, but I must have my pipe. (Takes it from his pocket.) What a fine view! This is a lovely spot. I hope Mlle. will not be long. (Strolls out slowly.)

Bel. (aside)—Very gracefully done, Colonel, very. (Comes down.) You seemed pained, Miss Temple.

Char.—How I have been deceived! How can this woman so requite you!

Bel. (laughing)—What can you expect from a woman whose ruling passion is position? He who counts on no friends is wise: he cannot be deceived.

Char.—I am just beginning to learn the hypocrisy of the world: I thought you were going to marry her.

Bel.—Never had such an intention.

Char. (rising)—Lient. Belcour, she believed—then it is you who are to blame.

Bel.—Neither, my fair Charlotte. Mlle. La Rue and I understood each other thoroughly from the start.

Char.—What do you mean?

Bel.—What an innocent you are!

Char. (sighing)—What a world this is!

Bel.—Why, that woman is a scheming adventuress. Her past can never bear the eyes of scrutiny. I hope you may never sink to her level whatever other fate may overtake you.

Char.—I hope I may die before I sink at all

Bel.—Has Montraville been here to-day?

Char.—No, Montraville has not been here for some time, though he writes each day, promising to come the next.

Bel.—A promise he does not keep.

Char.—You have seen him?

Bel.—Every day.

Char.—Is he very busy?

Bel. Well, I—I don't like to say anything against my friend, but when a man neglects a woman like you for——

Char.—For—— for another!

Bel.—Well

Char.—Speak out! another——you meant that?

Bel.—Well, for another.

Char. (choking)—Is this other a good woman?

Bel.—There is not a blemish on her name.

Char.—You mean Miss——

Bel. Miss Franklyn.

Char.—You have spoken of her before. How can she encourage Montraville when she knows——?

Bel.—She knows nothing, Miss Temple. Few know of your presence here.

Char.—Heaven is at least kind in this. But what does Montraville want of her? It is a rumor. Let them say what they will—I know Montraville is true to his vows to me.

Bel.—She is rich and handsome—he, handsome and a soldier. Many men have forgotten their vows when tempted with riches and beauty.

Char.—Not my Montraville. He has promised——

Bel.—To marry you. That was in England, seven months ago. He has not kept his word, and he never will, NOW!

Char.—Oh, merciful God!

Bel.—Montraville is not worthy of you. (Leans over her.) Charlotte, honor has sealed my lips, but they will not remain closed any longer. I love you, Charlotte.

Char.—Stop!

Bel. (intensely).—You are mourning yourself to death for a man who cares for you no longer.

Char.—His lips have not said so; until then I shall believe him constant.

Bel.—He will never make you his wife. Don't let him drag you lower. You so beautiful, so good. Charlotte, there is life before you yet—a bright happy life. Would that I were the one to make it doubly so.

(Enter La Rue laughing.)

La Rue.—What a pretty picture! I wish Montraville could see it. He is so appreciative.

Bel.—I will leave you the honor of telling it to him.

La Rue (goes to glass and arranges her toilet)—Good-by, Lieutenant Belcour. (Starts up, then comes down stage to Charlotte.) Zere is something I vould like to say before I go. You know, Charlotte, I shall now take a position in society very much above you. As ze wife of Col. Clayton I cannot afford to continue ze acquaintance of such a woman as Charlotte Temple. So let us be strangers and forget ozair. It will be happier for both. Good-by. (Starts up, pauses C.)

Char.—Stop, Mlle. La Rue! Have you forgotten the part you played in my downfall? It was you who entrapped me into my shame, and though you repudiate me now, some day you and I shall stand face to face before God, and how will you answer then? Oh, a thousand times would I rather bow my head beneath my shame than tread my path to honor over yours. Go, no happiness can come to you. Though I may fall, God will not let me fall alone!

La Rue (laughing)—How pious you have become. It is an excellent effect; it becomes you. Good-by. I will remember every word you have said. Oh, Lieut. Belcour, you may call if you like. I should not like to lose my gentlemen friends. Good-by. (Exit laughing D. C., and off L.)

Bel.—Charlotte, look up. One friend is left to you—a true friend, who loves you in spite of all!—who will not leave you.

Char.—This is my punishment for my sins.

Bel.—My poor, deserted girl, you shall not be left alone in your sorrow. Let me take you away from here. Let me prove to you that I am more worthy of your confidence than Montraville.

Char. (apprehensively)—Lieut. Belcour, you must not speak like this to me. I will not listen to you. I would be as guilty as though I were his wife. Ah, I am his wife! Love has made me his wife in the eyes of Heaven. Man cannot make our marriage more binding.

Bel.—The world looks upon such things differently. Let me protect you. Charlotte, I love you. I have loved you ever since Montraville began to act like a cur. I would die for you—only for one smile.

Char.—I will hear no more. Though all the world point the finger of scorn toward me, I shall still retain some vestige of my self-respect, and if Montraville deserts me I shall be faithful till death!

Bel. (aside)—Egad, but she is brave.

Char. (going up)—You must not come here again. I must demand of you the honor you would pay to Montraville's wife, and the courtesy due to the daughter of a gentleman. I bid you good-day, Lieut. Belcour. (Courtesies and exit L.)

Bel.—Injured innocence, how beautiful you are! Nothing so becomes a woman. She wears her dignity like a crown. Well, I suppose that means that I must go. I shall be patient and await events. (Goes up to D. C.) What's that—Major Buckingham and a lady! Miss Gushington, as I live!

(Enter Major Buckingham and Miss Gushington, D. C.)

Maj. B.—Here you are, Miss; I've done my duty in fetching you here. Now I hope you will permit me to depart.

Miss G.—Oh, my dear Major, I could never find my way back to town again. Do not desert me like this, I beg you!

Major (groans)—Oh, the devil take the woman!

Bel. (coming forward)—Miss Gushington, I believe

Miss G.—Why, Lieut. Belcour!

Major B.—Thank heaven—another man!

Miss G.—I did not expect to see you here. This is an unexpected pleasure. (Major B. Goes up.) Don't go, Major.

Bel.—I assure you, Miss Gushington, the surprise and pleasure are mutual. When did you leave England?

Miss G.—Some two months ago. I could not resist the longing to see my dear brother. (Glances toward the Major.) And incidentally, I hoped to find some traces of Charlotte Temple. You can imagine my surprise and pleasure when I met Major Buckingham, who knew all about her.

Major B.—And now that you have met Lieut. Belcour, I am sure he will be only too delighted to take charge of you.

Miss G.—What would people say to see me go away with one man; and return with another? So this is where Charlotte Temple lives. A gilded cage. And for this she has broken her mother's heart.

Bel.—I hope you will deal gently with her, Miss Gushington. Her sin is great, but her misery is greater. Spare a tender heart which is slowly breaking.

Miss G.—She doesn't deserve to be. I'll thank you, gentlemen, to permit us to have an interview in private.

Major B. (starting up)—With pleasure. I'll go back to camp.

Miss G.—Oh, no, Lieut. Belcour will walk in the garden with you. I'll not be long. It won't take many minutes to say what I have to say.

Bel.—Come along, Major, you will admire the garden. (Aside.) I hope she won't interfere with my plans. I'll not give her time to do much mischief.

Major B.—Oh, what have I done to be punished like this! I wish there would be a battle and we would have to go to the front at once. Now that woman will bore the life out of me.

Bel. (going up)—Major, if you only knew the true worth of woman—

Miss G.—Major, don't go away!

Maj. B. (Sarcastically)—A pleasant position to be in.

Miss G.—Now, Lieut. Belcour, where is Miss Temple?

Bel.—I think you will find her in that room.

Miss. G.—Oh, very well, you may go now.

(Exit Bel. and Major B. C. and off L.)

Miss G.— (goes up and knocks at door L.)—I wish this interview were over. (Goes down B.)

(Enter Charlotte L.)

Char.—What is your wish, madam? (Miss G. turns.) Miss Gushington! Oh, Miss Gushington! (Turns away.) Another bitter drop in my cup of wretchedness.

Miss G.—I didn't think you had shame enough in you to blush. You wicked girl! The whole of England is talking of your shame, while you are living here in brazen luxury. Are you the Charlotte Temple we all loved so well?

Char.—Don't reproach me. My heart can endure no more. I have prayed for death, but heaven has punished me with life.

Miss G.—It is a wonder you have humility enough to confess it. You, child—you ought to be parsing nouns in my class at Madame Du Pont's school; instead of smirking before a looking-glass and studying and studying how to please that graceless libertine.

Char.—Please do not speak harshly of Captain Monrville. Say what you will of me, but I do not vilify him.

Miss G.—You're a fool as well as a wretch. Has he married you? No, indeed. I'll say what I please about him; and to think that a girl whom every one loved and trusted would come to this. A girl who seemed so high-principled and honorable. Don't ever tell any one I was once your teacher. They'll think I put such nonsense into your head, and I'm more ashamed of you than you are of yourself.

Char.—Say what you will of me—you cannot make my heart break more than it has done. My only hope is that I may soon die and cease to be a disgrace to those who know me, and to the mother who finds it too hard to forgive me and take me back again. Oh, Miss Gushington, do not think my life is as you picture it. If you only knew! (Bursts into tears and sinks into chair L. of table.)

Miss Gushington R. of table begins to whimper, takes up her handkerchief to wipe away her tears, drops it on table.)

Miss G. (trying to be stern)—It serves you right; you deserve it. (A change comes over her; she looks at Charlotte a moment, goes softly around to her, drops on her knees beside her, and puts her arms about her.) My poor child, forgive me. I was too harsh. Tell me all about it; tell me everything.

Char.—Oh, don't, don't come near me! For the first time I realize how unworthy I am of one kind word from you.

Miss G.—This is not the time to think of the fitness of things. You are in terrible trouble. I was harsh only to find out if you had fallen as low as rumor said you had. Tell me every thing.

Char. (sobbing)—Oh, I cannot, I cannot!

Miss G.—Won't you trust me? Haven't I always been

kind to you? Didn't I do my duty to you as a teacher? And you know I loved you, Charlotte. I have come all the long distance from England more to find you than for any other reason.

Char.—I am so utterly lost.

Miss G.—So happily found. Charlotte, why have you not at least written to your mother?

Char. (surprised)—Why, Why, I have written to her and to my father. Three letters have I sent home, making a most humiliating confession of my sin, and craving their forgiveness.

Miss G.—Charlotte, I know that your parents have received no word from you, or had not when I sailed. Even then your father was preparing to come in search of you, but circumstances prevented.

Char.—Then they have not cursed me? My father is coming to tell me they forgive me, but why, why is he not here?

Miss G.—He could not leave your mother, dear.

Char. (bursting into tears)—She is ill—dead? Oh, don't tell me I have killed my darling mother!

Miss G.—No, dear, she is not dead, but very ill. By this time she is doubtless well and on her way to you.

Char.—My mother, I shall see my mother! Oh, I cannot tell you how my heart has ached for a sight of her dear face. But how can I meet her NOW!

Miss G.—Now is the time you need her!

Bel. (laughing without)—Now, now Major!

Miss G.—There come Major Buckingham and Lieut. Belcour. Take me to your room, my child, where we shall be free from interruption. I must know everything.

Char.—How good you are to me! (Rises and goes L.) Surely, if there are angels, they are like you.

Miss G. (leading her into room L.)—In that case, what a poor place Heaven must be. (Exeunt both D. L.)

(Enter Belcour and Major Buckingham D. C.)

Bel. (laughing)—My dear Major, before long you will change your time in regard to the fair sex. Wait till you see nothing but soldiers and dreary camp-life. Why, Miss Gushington would positively be a blessing, then. Think I will suggest it.

Major B. (looking around nervously)—If you dare hint such a thing to that tiresome woman, damn me, I'll have you relegated to the ranks!

Bel.—Very well put, my dear Major, but any one can see that you are desperately in love with Miss Gushie. Why, it is plain to be seen that she braved the dangers of the deep ostensibly to join her dear brother, but in reality to bask in the smiles of her dear Major.

Major B.—Smiles! Do you see any smiles on my face, sir?

Bel.—Not just at present. Oh, you will smile.

Major B.—Not when there's a woman around.

Bel.—Do you deny that you are in love?

Major B.—Do I show any signs of imbecility? I have lived, sir, in the wholesome atmosphere of men, and could never fawn around some simpering miss. They simply consist of freaks and frills;—no brains. Me love? Bah!

Bel.—Your Miss Gushington does wear a few frills or furbelows, but she will rule thee. Listen, my dear Major, to the words inscribed by Voltaire on a statue called Love: "Mankind, behold your master. I rule thee, I have ruled thee, or I will rule thee."

Maj. B.—Belcour, there are few men in this world more annoying than you can be.

Bel.—Because I won't allow you to be a misery to yourself. For what was marriage instituted? Miss Gushie in your affinity—you might just as well try to escape death.

Maj. B.—Then I shall court death; for a life with her would be a more terrible death than that which puts an end to life.

Bel.—You talk like a widower.

Maj. B.—I have talked with widowers.

Bel.—One marriage in ten is usually happy. You may be the lucky one.

Maj. B.—The odds are too great! I want an equal show. Keep your advice to yourself I am quite capable of attending to my own affairs.

Bel.—Ha, ha, ha, so you acknowledge that you have affairs. Ah, you sly Major, and you so severe with your friends!

Maj. B.—You, sir, are not one of my friends. My friends have my welfare at heart.

(Enter Miss G. her eyes red with weeping.)

Miss G.—Gentlemen, gentlemen, do you find it necessary to indulge in a war of words in order to keep in practice?

Bel.—The Major has just been telling me how he enjoys your society, and hopes you will—

Maj. B. (in a rage)—Lient. Belcour, you abominable previcator, you popinjay, you disgrace to the British army. I would be doing your acquaintance a favor if I had you court-martialed.

Bel.—The Major is the only modest. Miss Gushington; he doesn't wish to be known as a gallant.

Maj. B.—Speak for yourself, sir. I am no carpet knight, primping before a mirror and posing before the ladies.

Miss G.—Oh, how I admire your modesty, your dauntless courage. But don't you ever long for the companionship of the gentler sex?

Maj. B.—No, Miss. I never have such longings. I have managed to grow old without being in love with your sex.

Bel.—The more shame to you, Major, you have only half lived. True love is a rare happiness; “if it were common it would be better to be a man than be a god.” Take my advice and get married.

Miss G.—Oh, Lieut. Belcour.

Maj. B.—I get married! Do I look like an marrying man?

Miss G.—My dear Major, you look as one possessing the proper requisites, for we all know that under your bluff ways there beats a true, warm heart.

Bel.—Well said, Miss Gushington. The Major ought to be most gracious to you in the future for so nice a compliment.

(Enter Charlotte L.)

Miss G.—Major Buckingham, I wish to make you known to Miss Temple. Look up, Charlotte, you need never lower your eyes before such a man as Major Buckingham. I wish there were more like him in the world. (They exchange salutations.)

Bel.—The wind has changed. “The weather-cock never changes, it is the wind.”

Maj. B.—I’d like to twist the cockcomb’s nose. (To Miss G.) Well, are you ready to go?

Miss G.—Yes, at once. I have a story to tell you about some of your brother officers that will astound you. Lieut. Belcour, I bid you good-by. (Kisses Charlotte.) My child, be of good cheer; trust to me. All will be well shortly. I shall make but a short stay with my brother at Fishkill, and when I return, unless you have heard from your parents, you shall go back to England, with me.

Char.—Oh, God bless you, Miss Gushington! You have been a messenger of peace to me.

Maj. B. (bluffly)—Belcour!

Bel. (startled)—Yes, sir. (Salutes.)

Maj. B.—What was I going to say?

Bel. (smiling)—Something about Miss Gushington, sir.

Maj. B.—Damn it, sir, it was nothing of the kind.

Miss G.—It was about our departure.

Maj. B. (going up)—Lieut. Belcour, I command you to walk with Miss Gushington to the gate.

Bel.—With pleasure. (Goes up.)

Miss G. (going out)—Are you coming, Major.

Maj. B.—Presently. (Exeunt Miss G. and Bel. D. C. and off R.)

Major B. (stands C. Gruffly, as he would speak to his men.)—Miss Temple!

Char. (startled)—Yes, sir.

Maj. B. (embarrassed)—Er, ah, um—has Montraville acted the part of a gentleman with you?

Char. (surprised)—Thoroughly, sir.

Maj. B.—I mean, that is—are you to be married to him?

Char. (bursts into tears)—I—I do not know.

Maj. B.—Then he has not played the gentleman. I understand. I shall bring some influence on that young man, which I think will change his plans. Stop crying. You'll spoil your eyes. What damned fools women are!

Char.—Please do not be harsh with Montraville.

Maj. B. (shutting his teeth fiercely)—I won't.

Char.—He will do what is right. I trust him, and if I have faith in his honor, you should have. The blame is as much mine as his. Love can bring sorrow as well as great happiness.

Maj. B.—Yes, if Eve had behaved herself, you would have been spared all you've suffered. (Embarrassed.) You may find yourself without funds. When you do, please consider me your banker. Good day. (Exit hastily.)

Char.—What a strange man! Oh, how much lighter my heart feels! I am almost happy, but why have not my parents received my letters? Surely, Montraville did not fail to send them. Oh, Heaven! He would not purposely omit to do so. What am I to think? But thank heaven, I have friends at last, little as I merit them. Oh, my poor mother, will you forgive your child for all the sorrow she has caused you? Can I ever forgive myself. (Exit R. I. E.)

(Enter Belcour D. C. hastily.)

Bel.—Here comes Montraville. Luckily he did not meet the Major. Now for a timely word, and I believe we can all be saved some trouble.

(Enter Montraville D. C.)

Mont. (surprised)—Belcour!

Bel. (pretending to be startled and embarrassed)—Er, ah, why Montraville, is that you? I didn't expect—that is, you take a man so by surprise—I—

Mont.—What ails you? You act as though I had caught you stealing.

Bel. (trying to laugh)—Stealing your lady-love, eh? But what is this I hear about you and Julia Franklyn? Can I offer my congratulations?

Mont.—What do you mean?

Bel.—I heard you were to marry her.

Mont.—You are wrongly informed. If I marry at all, it is Charlotte I shall make my bride.

Bel.—But I thought—

Mont.—That I prefer Miss Franklyn? Gossip has a malicious tongue. It never wags but what it cuts to shreds

the spotless robe of purity.

Bel. (whistles as if surprised)—Some have no such robes to cut.

Mont.—Does the world think me so base? Desert Charlotte when she has given her all to me? My name shall be her shield to protect her tender heart against the poisonous arrows of a savage public.

Bel.—And let her drag it in the mire. You run from one blind folly to another. Can you not see the ruin such a union will cause?

Mont.—Do you not see the ruin I have caused? The world has not wronged her; I have done it all. I am to blame for everything.

Bel. (smiling)—Marriage, I suppose, will change the world's opinion. Clever girl—men will say. Women will call you a fool.

Mont.—Let them call me what they will. Heaven will bless the act; what do I care for mortal man?

Bel.—My good, sentimental friend, do you imagine no one but you has a right to provide for her future?

Mont. (hoarsely)—Belcour, you do not mean to insinuate that Charlotte is false to me?

Bel.—Montraville, some things are better left unsaid. You and I are friends. I would not sacrifice your friendship for the embraces of any woman on earth. Say no more about it.

Mont.—My God, Belcour, you do not mean what you say! No, no, I cannot, cannot believe such a thing of her. Do not destroy my faith in the whole world, for I would stake my very soul upon her honor.

Bel.—You would lose your soul.

Mont.—And you, my friend, have done me this wrong!

Bel.—Kill me, Montraville if you think I am to blame.

Mont.—Then there is no truth in the world. (Goes to desk and writes.)

Bel. (smiling)—Why will men commit themselves on paper? Every fool rushes to write a letter when he is angry, and wishes he could tear it up an hour later. Montraville, what do you intend to do?

Mont.—I shall never look upon her face again! I shall leave her, and though I shall provide for her, I will not see her.

Bel.—Your generosity is far too great.

Mont.—I cannot believe her false! (Places letter between the pages of a book on table.) I will see her; she cannot lie to me. If I am convinced of her perfidy, I will leave that letter to teach her the lesson she will deserve. Leave me, Belcour, I must speak with her alone.

Bel.—My friend be cautious. Do nothing rash. Wait and learn.

Mont.—Belcour has lied! I will not believe it. If Charlotte is false to me, then there is no honest woman living.

(Enter Charlotte L.)

Char.—Montraville! (Goes over to him and drops on her knees beside him.)

Mont.—Charlotte! Let me look into your eyes, girl, and tell me—have you been faithful to me always—before God—always?

Char.—Before God, always! How can you ask such a thing of me? You know, you must know!

Mont.—There is no other for whom you care?

Char.—My heart and soul belong to you!

Mont.—I believe you! Those eyes do not lie!

Char.—Oh, Robert, have you ceased to love me? Has another taken my place in your heart? These rumors that come to me—are they true?

Mont.—No, my love. But are you sure, Charlotte, it is I whom you love?

Char.—Sure? Ah, Montraville, so sure that my every waking thought is of you. Could any woman do more to prove her love? What I have done, debars me from forming desirable acquaintances, but I have not murmured; I am contented so long as you give me what you can of your spare hours when off duty.

Mont.—My poor girl, would I could undo the past and restore to your home and parents. Oh, I would to God I had never taken you from them.

Char.—But you can at least restore me to them—and you will make me your wife VERY soon will you not?—so I may have no need to blush when I meet my mother.

Mont. (walking up and down)—My God! What am I to do? Belcour's words ring like a death-knell in my ears while her eyes speak so eloquently of truth and fidelity.

Char. (going to him)—How strangely you act! You are not well. Your hand is hot—Montraville, you are ill!

Mont.—Yes, I am ill—suffering. I will be but poor company. I think I had better return to quarters. (Goes to her.) Do not grieve for me, Charlotte, and do not be surprised should you not see me for some time. Good-by. (Kisses her coldly.)

Char. (clinging to him)—Oh, Montraville! Montraville! Do not leave me, I pray you. Remain to-day at least! I see you so little, and if you are ill, who should care for you but your own Charlotte? Oh, think of the long, lonely days that must be mine! Think of all I have sacrificed for you! On my knees I implore you to keep your promises. Do not leave me in despair!

Mont.—Arise, Charlotte. (Aside.) I must make some ar-

rangement for her. How shall I end this interview? (Aloud.) Charlotte I must leave you, much as I desire to remain.

Char. (breaking down)—Montraville, I will endure all things. I will go far away and never trouble you again in life, if you will make me your wife. Oh save me, Montraville, save me! At your feet hear my cry of anguish—SAVE MY HONOR.

Mont.—My God! what a wretch I am! A selfish, ingrateful wretch. Charlotte, I will keep my promise.

Char.—Without delay? To-morrow, Robert?—to-morrow you will, you will?

Mont. (rising)—To-day—the sooner the better. I am a wretch not to have done it before. (Aside.) Belcour has lied! There is no truth in Heaven, if she is false to me.

Char.—Oh, Robert, you have lifted a weight from my heart!

Mont.—And from my own as well. Prepare yourself instantly—there shall not be a moment lost. I will go for a minister and witnesses. Wear your white dress, Charlotte—look your own self. I wish you to be such a bride as you should have been months ago.

Char.—Oh, Montraville, Heaven will bless you for this. Noble, noble Montraville, how I love you! (Embrace.)

Mont. (Aside)—Poor girl—little did she know how near I was to sacrificing her love. Thank God, I have come to my senses. Now for a minister to give her the protection of a husband's love. (Exit D. C. and off R.)

Char. (with hands crossed on her breast, looking upward)—At last, peace comes to me. His wife to-day! To-morrow I can face the world without a blush. (Exit Charlotte.)

(Enter Belcour.)

Bel.—I would give a good deal to have heard that interview. (Goes to book and takes out letter.) He should have entrusted this to my care. I wonder if my words took root in his mind. (Opens note, read it) The very thing! Fate plays into my hands. (Goes to door L.) Dressing! Gads, what a beautiful neck! I'd barter my soul for one embrace in those arms. (knocks.)

Char. (within)—Who knocks?

Bel.—Belcour. I have a message for you.

Char.—One moment, please. From whom?

Bel.—From Montraville.

Char.—Montraville? Why, he has just gone—

Bel.—Yes, I know, but he gave me a note for you. You will find it on the table. (Exit.)

(Enter Charlotte in white negligee wrapper.)

Char.—A note for me? (Takes it half laughing.) Why, he was coming right back; but perhaps he has forgotten some-

thing. (Reads.) "Farewell, unworthy love. My eyes have at length opened to your treachery. It will not make you happier to explain. You know—your own conscience tells you why I forsake you. His arms have taken the place of mine—his image has supplanted mine in your heart. Let his name protect you as I intended mine should do. Farewell!—Mont-raville." God help me now! (Staggers and faints in the arms of Belcour.)

Bel. (leaning over her—She is mine! To hold her to my heart like this has been my dream for years. (Kisses her.) Such rapture as this never filled my heart before.

(Enter Montraville.)

Mont. (sees Charlotte in Belcour's arms)—My God! she is in his arms! he spoke the truth!

Bel. (looks in mirror and sees Montraville. Aside)—He has returned. (Aloud, to Charlotte, who is still in a faint.) Tell me again, sweet love, that you love me. These words, like sweet music, fill my soul with an illimitable ecstasy. And it was to be near me that you gave yourself to Montraville?

Mont. (rushing up to Belcour in a fury)—You traitor!

Bel. (as if alarmed)—Montraville! (Charlotte recovers and leaves Belcour's embrace.)

Mont. (to Charlotte)—At last you appear before me as you are. I gave you an honest man's love while you employed the pretenses of a Magdalen.

Char.—Montraville, what have I done?

Mont.—Ask your false heart. I loved and trusted you while I had cause to doubt your honesty; but I understand you now. Belcour had the manhood to tell me—you would continue to trick me. Go to him—you loved him from the first; I was only a medium you used to be near him.

Char.—It is not true!—a most terrible lie! I never loved him. You are my first love, and will be my last, even when death stops the throbbing of this tortured heart.

Mont.—Madam, histrionic art does well to entertain the public. Your talents are wasted on me.

Char.—You wish to be rid of me. This letter was used for that purpose. The blame must rest on me, for I have no honor that opprobrium can tarnish. The fair name of Montraville must bear no stain when he leads Miss Franklyn to the altar. (Weeps.)

Bel. (aside, smiling)—My star is in the ascendant

Mont. (to Belcour)—I will see you anon, and if by that time you have given my discarded toy your honorable name, I shall do my best to widow her and save you the disgrace of being made a cuckold.

Bel.—You will find me at your command.

Mont.—Farewell! May your joys be equal to my despair!

(Starts to go.)

Char. (falling on her knees at his feet)—You must not go until you hear me!

Mont. (starting again to go)—Farewell!

Char. (catches hold of his hands)—For God's sake, listen to me! I am innocent!

Mont. (backs slowly to door, all the time trying to release his hand)—Go to your lover! I bequeath you to him; Go back to his arms! (Pushes her from him, and she falls on her face to the floor in a spasm of grief.) (Exit Montraville.)

Bel. (standing over Charlotte)—You are now at my mercy, fair Charlotte! You are mine!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Scene I.—A street in New York, showing exterior of Col. Clayton's house with steps and a practical door, also window with blind drawn, on which shadow can be thrown. House brightly illuminated. (Or it can be just a street scene, with snow falling.) Snow. Soldiers and citizens passing. (Enter Montraville and Major Buckingham L. I. E.)

* * *

Maj.—Montraville, I've been thinking of that unfortunate girl. I can't get her out of my mind to-night.

Mont.—I think of her always, and never without a bitter pang. I believed I loved her sincerely when we left England, and though I soon discovered that it was only a passing fancy, I should have married her, had she not so outrageously deceived me.

Maj.—If she did deceive you, I wonder where she is to-night.

Mont.—That is the thought which tortures me. Where is she to-night? Thinking she might be in need, I sent a messenger to her with money; but she was gone, and search as I will, I can find no trace of her.

Maj.—Poor girl! Of all the women in the world I have ever seen, she is the only one for whom I could change my bad opinion of the sex. (Shadow of La Rue seen on the window-blind.) But there is the real culprit, Montraville, and were she not my Colonel's wife, I'd—

Mont.—Hush! She deserves it, we all acknowledge, but we must be cautious of what we say. For myself I would rather walk into a prison than into this house. But her husband is an esteemed friend. (Going up steps.)

Maj.—Wait, Montraville, what if we should meet Belcour?

Mont.—I shall not forget where I am. Trust me. (They knock and are admitted.)

(Enter Charlotte L. I. E. weary, faint and very pale.)

Char.—Oh, merciful Heaven, sustain me. Let me not die in the street. The way has been so long—I am so faint, so ill. (Enter a foot-soldier—they meet.) Pardon me, sir, but will you kindly tell me where Mrs. Clayton lives?

Soldier—Why, bless you, my sweet lady, I will with all my heart, but if you are going to make a petition to her, it will be useless.

Char.—Say you so? Then do you know Captain Montraville?

Sol.—Yes, and God bless him. A better officer than he never lived. He is so good to us all.

Char.—Gracious Heaven, is Montraville unjust to none but me? (Staggers and almost faints.)

Sol.—Come, I will show you where Mrs. Clayton lives, for you are indeed very ill and she may aid you.

Char.—I hope she does not live far away, for I am so weary. (Shivers with cold.)

Sol.—And you are cold. Here is Mrs. Clayton's house. I hope she will give you shelter.

Dark; change to Col. Clayton's drawing-room. La Rue, Montraville, Major Buckingham, Miss Gushington, Julia Franklyn, Miss Mayfair, and Col. Clayton discovered. The drawing-room must be furnished, and the ladies costumed according to the period of 1774.)

Col. C.—Gentlemen, if I read the signs of the times correctly, you will soon be in the field of action. Hancock, the President of the Provincial Congress, has sent a request to Gen. Gage to cease erecting fortifications at Boston Neck.

Maj.—Yes, but our General will not heed the request. Egad, this Hancock is enlisting men to be ready at a moment's notice.

Mont.—And Col. Washington, in his last speech in Congress, made some rather treasonable remarks. He said the people should be ready to preserve their freedom, or lose their lives in defense of it.

Bel.—They have sent Quincy Adams to England, requesting that the troops be withdrawn. They claim we are a menace to the colonists.

Col. C.—I think the answer will be such that these malcontents will receive a wholesome lesson, and be given to understand they are still the King's subjects.

La Rue—My dear military friends, spare us from further political discussion. Tell us of something pleasant. I assure you we ladies are sick of wars and rumors of wars.

Miss G.—My dear madam, you have a husband who has won honor and glory on the battle-field; are you not proud of that part of the unpleasant subject?

La Rue (laughing)—I am prouder of his beautiful moustachios. (Pulling at them, then going to the window.) Oh! What a dreadful night!

(Col. Clayton passes snuff-box.)

Bel.—What matters the winter to our gracious hostess? To her, life is one long summer day, as it should be.

La Rue—I was zinking of ze poor and unfortunate. Ze storm is dreadful for zem.

Bel. (to La Rue)—I wonder where Charlotte Temple is to-night!

La Rue—How dare you speak of her to me.

Col. C.—Would that all women were as kind as Madam Clayton. How much suffering would be alleviated!

Miss G.—'Tis well that some of my sex feel that the sorrows of others, for 'tis precious little sympathy you men show to the crushed and heart-sick. I am learning the perfidy of some of your sex as well as the heartlessness of some of my own.

Bel.—My dear Miss Gushington, are you really going to tell us of some special case that has come under your observation? A little choice gossip would quite regale us.

Miss Gush.—It may not be amiss in the midst of all this festivity to remember those who are suffering in this world; and I do know a case which I am sure will appeal to Madam Clayton's boundless charity, and will give you gossip-mongering gentlemen a chance to judge your fellows.

La Rue (aside, with a covert meaning in her words)—You shall save it for my private ear, Miss Gushington.

Col. C.—Selfish woman! To punish you, she shall tell it to us all.

Miss G.—The sentence is passed; the story must be told. It is not long, and I am not a good story-teller. That it is true, I will vouch. When the British troops left England nine months ago, two women came with them, accompanying their lovers. One of these women was an innocent girl, who was led on by the wiles of the other, a scheming adventuress, who thought only of her own pleasure, and did not hesitate in causing the other's downfall. The lover of the younger girl promised to marry her as soon as America was reached; but ere that event happened he wearied of his toy and deserted her for another, rich, handsome, and who, as rumor says, he is to marry. Of the other two, the woman deserted the man to wed another of high power; and he, wearied as well of her, sought all the methods known to him to win the love of the other woman from the man she loved and trusted. He, I believe, would stop at no treachery, however base. And more than likely, there has been foul play, (looks at Belcour) for one day the lover of the girl, filled with

remorse and to spare her further shame, went at last to fulfill his neglected promise, and to make her his wife. The promise was never kept. The girl disappeared, and all the efforts of her friends have failed to find her. Now, you charitable people, what is to be done?

Miss F.—Offer a reward. I will donate a hundred pounds.

La Rue—And when she is found, bring her to me. I will gladly give her a home.

Col. C.—I will give her more than a home. I will give her honor. That damned scoundrel shall be made to marry her, and the woman and man who accompanied them shall receive the punishment they deserve.

Miss G.—But you forget, Colonel; the woman has married a man in power, and—

Col. C.—I don't care if she has married the King—she shall be punished and disgraced.

Mont. (aside)—My God! What am I to think? What does this woman know?

Major (aside)—Dem me if that lady doesn't stand acquaintance. There is something besides bows and furbelows to her, after all. (Aloud.) Miss Gushington, I quite admire your spirit—it does you credit. You are a clever woman—dem me, if you ain't.

La Rue—I am afraid Miss Gushington's story has left a very unpleasant impression. I propose ze dance.

Bel.—Yes, yes, the dance. Major, you should dance with Miss Gushington.

Major—I will, with pleasure. Miss Gushie, have I the honor?

Bel.—Oho, the Major's coming on.

(They form and dance the minuet.)

Col. C. (after dance)—There's nothing like a little dancing, after all, to warm the blood and drive care away. Eh, Major! I think we can instruct the young men yet.

Major—Egad, the young men need not think they can have it all their own way yet awhile. 'Tis well to take a little conceit out of them.

Miss G.—I never had a better partner, and I have had a goodly number.

Maj.—No wonder, you are grace itself. (Takes a pinch of snuff and draws out handkerchief.) (Aside.) There, I think honors are even.

(Couples group themselves, playing games at different tables.)

Pei. (aside to La Rue)—Do you think she meant Charlotte Temple?

La Rue—I am sure she did. Zat woman shall come here no more. She vill make trouble. (Major comes down.)

Bel.—Ah, my dear Major, do you know you are constantly surprising me?

Maj.—That does not in the least surprise me.

La Rue—Now, gentlemen, zere is a storm brewing.

Miss G.—Madam, did you ever see oil and water mingle? Then you can hardly expect these gentlemen to affiliate; their natures are antagonistic.

Julia Franklyn—I did not know you were a character reader, Miss Gushington. Define the character of these gentlemen. It would amuse us, I am sure.

Bel.—Do, Miss Gushington. I would really enjoy seeing myself through your lovely eyes.

Miss G.—As I have studied palmistry, I will oblige you in SO SMALL a matter. You, Lieut. Belcour (taking his hand), would like to be advanced to the military title of our gallant Major, without earning its merit. You would enjoy the prestige for vain-glorious reasons. You are self-opinionated to an alarming degree. You desire the good opinion of our sex, but you would not hesitate to betray them.

Maj.—Gads, who would have thought it of her. She improves wonderfully on acquaintance, demmed if she don't.

La Rue—There, Lieut. Belcour, is your vanity satisfied? Miss Gushington, you have a marvelous gift.

Bel.—Of stretching the truth. I warrant she will give the Major a most fair character. But see you anything else?

Miss G.—Yes, this life-line being so short and ending in prongs signifies an early, sudden death.

Bel.—A pleasant prophecy! Eh, Major, now for you.

Miss G.—I shall be as truthful with him as with you. (Taking the Major's hand.) Major Buckingham is not so easily read, being more profound; but one can see depicted in every line the sterling qualities of a true friend, a generous foe, an open enemy, and one who shrinks from notoriety. Under his bluntness there beats a heart full of kindness, especially to the unfortunate.

Maj. (aside)—I think I compare favorably with this pop-injay. Dem me, if she isn't worth a dozen ordinary women.

La Rue.—Any ozair virtues lying dormant zat are likely to develop? Major, I shall begin to zink ye are entertaining an angel in disguise.

Miss G.—Major Buckingham has some qualities that need correcting.

Maj.—Just like a woman to spoil it all.

Miss G.—He is like tinder—ignites at the slightest friction. Flashes up, but soon dies out, doing no harm. That comes from the want of more of the society of our sex.

Bel.—Really, Miss Gushie, I was afraid you were going to make a complete demigod of your Major, but your pref-

erence for him does not need your flattering reading of his character to assure us of it.

Major—Nor your chagrin to warrant any insult to a lady who is keen-sighted enough to read you, as I know you.

La Rue—Come, gentlemen, do not quarrel. You shall laugh at my expense. Miss Gushington shall read me.

Bel. (aside)—Better not.

La Rue—Pah, I defy her to say anysing unpleasant of me. She could not dare.

Maj.—Now, Miss Gushie.

Miss G.—If Madam desires; but, being her guest, I would rather not.

La Rue—That need not prevent you from saying anysing unpleasant for me to hear. I beg of you to proceed.

Miss G. (shrugging her shoulders, then taking La Rue's hand.) Madam, when it pleases her, can be most gracious. She can charm by a gift of manner and win great honors, but she would not hesitate to tread over human hearts to gain her ends. I see by your hand that you will soon meet with great reverses, and know much sorrow. (Rising.) I think I have contributed most fully to my share of your amusement.

La Rue—Miss Gushington, you possess most remarkable gifts, to see anysing so improbable in my life. We did not dream you could forecast the future when you were teaching school at Madame Du Pont's.

Miss G. (pleasantly)—You, also. (La Rue bites her lips.)

La Rue—A truce to all this. What will you do next to spoil our pleasures, I wonder? I know what will restore our wounded feelings best of all. If ze devotees of ze card-table are agreeable, ve vill repair to ze refreshment-room. (Those at table rise.)

Col. C.—Montraville, you will have to pay more attention to your playing, or you will lose your reputation.

La Rue—Now, good people, if you have settled who are ze victors, ve vill repair to ze refreshment-room.

Col. C.—Miss Franklyn, may I have the pleasure? (She takes his arm.) Montraville, we shall fight a duel, shall we? (Exit laughing.)

Maj.—Miss Gushie, permit me the honor.

Miss G.—With pleasure, Major, and I do hope you won't consider me inmodest in what I said to you.

Maj.—Far from it. I like to hear a man or woman speak what they think, and no humbug about it.

Miss G.—I am so glad you find something in me to admire.

Maj.—Why, I began to think I am liable to admire you too much, dem me, if I ain't. (Aside). I hope no one heard me.

Miss G.—Oh, you charming Major, how delightful you can be! (Exit with Major. Exit all but Belcour and La Rue.

and Montraville, who hangs back.)

La Rue.—I believe zat woman came here purposely to annoy me.

Bel.—Will you take my arm?

Mont.—One moment, Beleur, I have a word to say to you.

Bel.—Really, you do me honor, Montraville.

Mont.—You, as well as I, understood the story that woman told. I am going to investigate it, and if I find you have lied to me, or through some trickery deceived me, I am going to kill you!

Bel.—Not so loud, my friend! Miss Franklyn will overhear you.

Mont.—Only let me learn that she speaks truly, and all the world shall hear me. I did my share of wrong, and I am suffering for it. If I find Charlotte innocent and you a trickster, you shall answer to God the moment I can find you! (Exit after others.)

Bel.—Comforting! I think he has spoiled my appetite.

(Enter Barker D. C.)

Barker (with letter).—Please you, Madam, a lady begged me to give you this letter.

La Rue.—My dear Linctenant, vill you please say to my guests zat I am detained a moment. It is some poor woman who seeks assistance of me, and I feel I must see her.

Bel.—They say "Charity covers a multitude of sins." What boundless acts of mercy you will have to perform, to cover yours. (Laughs and exit.)

La Rue (turning to Barker).—Barker, vy do you distress me by business in the ze evening, when you know I am engaged?

Barker.—I told her, Madam, that she had better call again, but she said you knew her and would surely see her.

La Rue (opens letter).—From Charlotte Mon Dieu, at zis time! (Crushes letter in her hand.) Barker, I have told you a hundred times I could not be annoyed wiz beggars or petitions from strangers. Tell zis woman I am sorry I cannot relieve everybody. I do not know zis woman!

Charlotte (entering D. C.).—You are speaking falsely. Not know Charlotte Temple?

La Rue.—Leave my house!

Char.—Not until you have heard what I have to say! But for you I might still have been an innocent girl. It is you who have brought me to this, and all for your own advancement; but I shall go to Col. Clayton and tell him all unless you undo the wrong you have done me.

La Rue.—You are a mad woman! Barker, take her away: she terrifies me to death.

Barker.—Madam, I am your butler, but I'll lose my position before I'll lay hands on that girl.

La Rue—Leave my house, both of you! (Barker bows and exit.)

Char.—Oh, God, this is too much! What will become of me? Must I humiliate myself to you? Must I beg of you on my knees not to let me perish in the street? I am penniless, homeless, and ill—

La Rue—You should appeal to Captain Montraville.

Char.—I would die before I would accept a farthing from his hand!

La Rue (laughing).—A little more poverty will take down some of ze haughty spirit.

Char.—Is it a haughty spirit which can permit me to come to you of all the world. Madam, I beg of you to remember that we were friends, woe, woe to me! Think of Montraville's promise and your counsel.

La Rue—And of your own unfaithfulness.

Char.—I unfaithful? Never!

La Rue—Montraville could but believe the evidence of his eyes. Did he not find you in Belcour's arms?

Char.—It is a lie! I would have died first!

La Rue—Well, it is a choice of whom to believe, and I prefer Montraville.

Char.—My God, can Montraville be so base!

La Rue—Zat is his story. He was about to marry you, vent for ze minister, but forgetting a letter he had left on ze table, returned for it and found you in Belcour's arms. Of course, you fainted and zat made a pretty tableau, though you failed to hear his parting words, unless you vere shamming. And now you will leave my house, unless you vish to interview Capt. Montraville, who is yonder vis his fiancée. (Draws aside curtains, where feasting is to be seen.)

Char. (staggering forward)—Montraville, Montraville! Oh, tell him I want to say just one word! If what you tell me is true, call him here that I may vindicate myself.

La Rue—You may see Montraville; I will send him to you. (Aside) Good! How he will scorn her. He thinks his HONOR outraged. (Laughs and exit.)

(Montraville enters, but starts in astonishment when he beholds Charlotte?)

Mont.—What brings YOU here?

Char.—To vindicate myself; and oh, Montraville, by the love you once had for me, pity my distress.

Mont.—Which you brought upon yourself; and I, blind fool, once thought you pure as a vestal virgin.

Char.—Spare me, and believe me. I was ever true to thee!

Mont.—Wretched girl that you are! Pollute not your lips with a lie. Did I not see you in the arms of your lover? I went away intending to make you my wife; I returned only to find you giving caress for caress, and his kisses still clinging to your lips.

Char. (dazed).—Then SHE did not lie. He returned for that letter. Oh, the refined cruelty of fate! FOUND ME IN BELCOUR'S ARMS. No, no, it could not be!

Mont.—Now, I had better send your LOVER to you—the one for whom I was dethroned. Oh, I thank God for my fortunate return; for now the lady whom I shall soon lead to the altar is in every way worthy of MY LOVE.

Char.—Now Heavenly Father, pity me, for I am indeed lost. Oh, how his words sear my brain! (Pressing hands to head.)

(Enter Miss Julia Franklyn.)

Miss F.—I beg your pardon—I did not know you were in conversation with this lady.

Mont.—This PERSON was at one time a valued friend of mine in England. I would introduce you to her, my dear Julia, if she were your social and moral equal. I know of no greater indignity to you, and no higher honor to her, than for me to present her to you.

Char. (utters a sharp cry and staggers).—May God forgive this cruel blow!

Miss F.—What is her name?

Mont.—Magdalene.

Char.—A victim of man's perfidy. You will find her everywhere—in the past, in the present, and in the future. Love that is a man's plaything, is a woman's ruin. He eats the delicacies, I the crumbs. He has plenty, I have want. He suffers from too much warmth, I enjoy the luxury of freezing. People bow to him and smile; women crowd around him, each outdoing the others in their efforts to please him, while people shun and frown upon me. Women say "Shameless creature," and men say in tones of disgust, "How low women fall!" True, the thing that makes me fall lifts men up. Look at me, then look at him. I am the victim, he is the seducer!

Miss F.—Charlotte Temple!

Mont.—Who broke an honest man's heart to amuse herself with. Come Julia, this is no atmosphere for you. Women who have no honor left invent splendid tales to play upon the feelings of honest persons. Astuteness comes with vice.

Miss F.—I could pity some in your condition, but pity for you would be wasted. Your history is written in red letters.

Char.—With the blood of my poor heart!

Mont.—Come, Julia. (Puts arm about her, and exeunt to the door.)

Char.—You may leave me, Montraville, but my memory will burn in your brain like living coals of fire. Your tears will be endless monuments upon my grave.

(Enter La Rue.)

La Rue (apprehensively)—Miss Franklyn and Captain Montraville, do you not know your presence is desired, and your absence may cause comment? (Touches bell.)

(Enter Barker.)

La Rue—Show zat voman to ze street. I command you!

Char. (lifts her hands above her head and advances wildly toward La Rue.)—Oh, God, mete out to this woman the punishment she deserves. (To La Rue.)—May Heaven blight your life as you have blighted mine. May you be turned into the street as you now turn me, and may you be spurned and despised by all the world as you have spurned me. I call God to bring his vengeance upon you all for now and for eternity! (She advances toward La Rue, who retreats in great fear toward portieres L. and finally with a scream divides them almost fainting. Julia Franklyn clings to Montraville. Enter all in confusion.)

Char. (goes mad)—See (pointing to Miss Franklyn), she is waiting for you in her bridal dress, and I am singing the requiem. And the wide sea is washing ever, ever at my feet, but I cannot cross it. It says lost! Lost!

La Rue—She is mad! Take her away! She will kill you!

Miss G.—Come with me, poor soul; I will care for you. Gentlemen, the lost one of my story is found. See that the guilty reap their punishment! (Takes Charlotte in her arms.)

CURTAIN.

(To make this act more picturesque, Miss Franklyn can sing an old-fashioned ballad, accompanying herself on a spinet, Montraville leaning over her. This can be introduced early in the act.)

ACT III.

Scene:—Interior of Miss Gushington's room. Charlotte reclining on lounge R. C. or C. Miss Gushington kneeling beside her.

Miss G.—At last the poor lamb has ceased to rave. How my heart aches to hear her call upon her mother whom she will see no more.

Char. (starting up)—Oh, do you not see her? My poor mother going to her death to expiate my sins. See her tears of blood and crown of thorns—all for a ruined, ungrateful

girl. Save me! Save me, Montraville, I am sinking!

Miss G.—There, there, poor child, you are with friends. Be calm. Try to get well, and with God's assistance, I will yet save and restore you to your home.

Char. (with returning reason)—Angel of peace and mercy, art thou come to deliver me?

Miss G.—My dear Charlotte, be of good cheer; all the dangers and trials for your poor wounded heart are o'er. I will never leave you till you are placed in your mother's arms. I will take you myself back to bonnie England.

Char.—Oh, let me hear you say those blessed words again. They are a sweet, healing balm that will strengthen my sick heart. You have almost made me happy.

Miss G.—Then lay the comforting thought to your heart, and grow strong. All will yet be well, and the guilty will be punished. Col. Clayton knows of his wife's perfidy, and Montraville of Belcour's villainy. Oh, if we could have found you how much sorrow we might have spared you. (Weeps.)

Char.—How good you are! It seems a long time since I shed a tear. My head and heart are both on fire, but these tears of yours seem to cool and refresh me. Remain near me, my good, noble friend. I shall feel, then, that I am safe and I shall rest.

Miss G.—Try, my dear one; sleep is a great healer. I will sit by you and hold your hand. (Arranges her bed and sits beside her.) Oh, if the dear Major can only get word to Montraville, all may yet be well. He must fulfill his promise to this dear child! (Charlotte sleeps.) At last she sleeps. (Enter Major Buckingham D. L. Miss G. rises as the Major enters.)

Maj.—May I come in?

Miss G. (going to him)—When the angel of death hovers so near, he sanctifies any place. Tell me, have you seen Captain Montraville?

Maj.—Yes, he will soon be here. He is bowed down with remorse now that he has found out the villainy of Belcour. That fellow is a damnable villain—pardon me. And I fear Belcour's life will pay the forfeit.

Miss G.—He is a scoundrel! I hope Montraville will meet him and call him to account.

Maj.—Miss Gushington, you have a heart of gold, and dem me, it may not be the right place, but you know when I have anything to say, I say it. Now if you will undertake to prune off the corners, I might yet become quite a success as a married man. There, what do you say?—that's a straight shot.

Miss G.—You know, Major, nothing succeeds like success. I can try.

Maj. (embracing her)—Surrendered! don't you think you could give me a salute to bind the bargain without waking Miss Temple? (Miss G. tip-toes, looks at Charlotte, then they embrace in a very methodical fashion.)

Maj.—Well, that is nice, and dem me if I don't believe I could stand another. (They embrace and separate.)

Maj.—That's like the measles—when you first get 'em you have 'em bad. Miss Gushington, don't you think we could retire for a few moments where it is more exclusive? We might awaken Miss Temple, and such a sudden shock—

Miss G.—Major! Miss Temple would be rejoiced.

Maj.—Let us defer the rejoicing until she is better, and I've so much to say to you I'm demmed if I can wait. (Exit both D. R.)

(Enter Belcour D. L. Sees Charlotte.)

Bel. (startled)—I thought to see Miss Gushington, and find Charlotte.

(Charlotte awakens suddenly and sits up startled.)

Char.—Lieut. Belcour, why do you come here?

Bel.—I—I—that is, I come in behalf of Mrs. Clayton.

Char. (turning away)—What can I do for her?

Bel.—She wishes to see you. She has something to say to you—I think it is to ask your forgiveness.

Char. (eagerly)—Then I will see her—bring her to me. Can I do less than my dear Master?

Bel. (crossing L.)—The day is won, and that wretched Circe is saved, after all! (Goes to D. L. and motions. Enter La Rue D. L.)

La Rue (affected)—Charlotte, my poor girl, can you forgive me?

Char.—I can, oh, indeed, I can!

La Rue—They tell me you are dying.

Char. (startled)—Dying! Oh, no! no! not dying?

La Rue—Did you not know it? How heartless zese people are to keep ze truth from you!

Char. (weeping)—Oh, let me not die, dear Father, until I behold my blessed mother once more!

Bel.—Stuff! You cannot always believe what doctors say. I think you will get well.

La Rue—Let us hope it is so, but I much fear for you, poor child. Charlotte, you have forgiven me, will you not also make me a promise?

Char.—A promise?

La Rue—My husband is coming here. He knows everything about me and about you, and he comes to you for ze truth. You will deny it—every word, will you not?

Char.—Would you have me die with a lie on my lips?

La Rue—For my sake, Charlotte, sink of how we loved each o'zair in England.

Char.—I cannot, for thinking of how you deserted me here.

La Rue—But you have forgiven zat.

Char.—I will be silent, but I will not lie!

La Rue (in sudden rage)—You are a vile girl, and ought to die!

Char. (groans)—Oh, leave me, leave me, for the love of Heaven! You are killing me. (Falls back on her pillow.)

La Rue (in desperate rage)—Belcour, what am I to do?

Bel.—Take what comes to you. It is your turn now.

La Rue—Col. Clayton will kill me. I have sullied his name.

Bel.—Well, you deserve all you will receive.

La Rue—How can you speak so to me? Have you forgotten zat you love me once?

Bel.—You forgot it—not I!

La Rue—Oh, what shall I do! What shall I do!

Bel.—What you have done before—find some agreeable gentleman to elope with.

La Rue (proudly)—You insult me with such words!

Bel. (mockingly)—What else can you do?

(Enter Barker hurriedly.)

Barker—I beg pardon, Madam, as you bade me hasten here if any one called to see the Colonel. (Stops for breath.)

La Rue—Vell, speak out! Tell your news.

Barker—Col. Clayton, Major Buckingham, and a strange gentleman from England have been having a dreadful time at your house. The Colonel has threatened vengeance on you. They talked of a court-martial, and a warrant has been issued for the arrest of Lieut. Belcour.

Bel.—For me!

Barker—Col. Clayton said he was glad he knew the whole truth at last. Major Buckingham got the story from Miss Gushington.

Bel.—And she from Charlotte Temple. That will do. You may go. Here. (Offers him money.)

Barker—No, thank you, sir. (Exit.)

La Rue—And now, Lieut. Belcour, it is your turn! What will you do?

Bel.—I? If a vessel sails for France in less than two hours, I shall depart with it. Disguises are plentiful, and I scarcely think I shall be caught.

La Rue—And what is to become of me?

Bel.—That is not my affair.

La Rue—It is! You brought me here; you got me into zis trouble. Now you shall help me out.

Bel. — Well, Mrs. Clayton, I have no objections to your charming society, but I have not sufficient funds.

La Rue (takes off her jewels)—Zere are my diamonds. Stay! I will not leave you. I may not find you again. We vill go togezair. (Going to bed.) Now, Charlotte Temple, you may die in peace; you are avenged. (Crossing.) Oh, I do not know what is in store for me. Does zis man love me? No! When he tires of me he will desert me as Montraville deserted her, but not like her can I die. (Exit Belcour.) What a future—ze victim of a man I dare not trust!

Char. (desperately)—La Rue, La Rue, do not go! Think twice and try to trust God! You will regret!

La Rue—It is too late. (Exit after Belcour.)

Char.—She has gone to her destruction. It is retribution? Oh, Father in Heaven, let me not die until I am forgiven.

Mr. Temple (without L.)—You told me that I shall now see my beloved child—that my darling still lives—that I may bless her—that I may—(Entering.)

Char. (rising on pillow as she hears his voice)—Father, my father!

(Enter Miss G. and Major B. from R.; Col. C. from L.)

Mr. T.—My child! Do I again behold thee? Do I hear you call me father? Oh, speak to me that I may know you live. My child! My darling!

Char.—Father, dear father, you do not curse me? You forgive me?

Mr. T.—A thousand times, my poor deceived child! I have come to take you to your mother. There, in the old home you will forget the past.

Char. (smiling)—Is it vacation, and you have come for me? Are the young ladies at their studies? It seems so quiet here.

Col. C.—Poor child! (Turns away.)

Miss C.—Her mind wanders at times. She fancies she is still at school.

Char.—Mother, rock me to sleep. I am so tired—so tired.

Mr. T.—God in Heaven! Have I found her only to lose her again? Charlotte, Charlotte, my child.

(Enter La Rue stealthily and in terror, trying to conceal herself.)

La Rue—I am full of terror. Montraville has attacked Belcour, and will kill him. Now I must sue for mercy.

(Clashing of arms heard outside with exclamations: "Die, traitor die," and "Montraville spare me!")

Maj.—I will ascertain the meaning of this. (Goes to door, Montraville enters in great excitement.)

Mont.—Tell me I am not too late! Not dying! Not dead, Charlotte, my poor Charlotte. Murdered, but as God is my witness, not by my own hand. Our false friend has just paid for his treachery with his life.

Mr. T.—Hush, hush! This place is hallowed—you must not speak like this.

Mont.—If thou art the father of Charlotte Temple, I am Montraville. Take this sword that has let out the lifeblood of one villain, and kill me. I deserve it. Strike now and save me from the misery of reflection and everlasting remorse.

Mr. T. (takes sword and places it against Montraville's heart. As Montraville raises Charlotte's hand to his lips, Mr. T. throws the weapon away.) No! If you were the undoing of my child your own conscience shall punish you. Look upon the blighted innocence of my child; think of the grief of a heart-broken mother, and may thy heart feel such sorrow as will merit the mercy of heaven.

La Rue—(Going to Col. Clayton and kneeling before him)—Forgive me as he has been forgiven.

Col. C.—Never! You made a stepping-stone of a poor, innocent, trusting heart to gain your end. Go! Never let me see you again, and may God forgive you—I never shall.

(La Rue leaves the room in great humility and grief.)

Miss G.—Hush, she is reviving.

(Charlotte opens her eyes. Montraville kneeling beside her.)

Mont.—Charlotte, 'tis I—your Montraville. Oh, I pray you, live—live, that I may right a great wrong.

Char.—Am I dreaming, or do I see you again?

Mont.—I dare not ask forgiveness, for my sin is too great; but as God is my witness, I too have been basely deceived.

Char.—But you know now.

Mont.—That my Charlotte was as true as steel, as pure as snow. Only live to become my wife, and may a life of devotion repay you for the past.

Char.—It is too late—too late!

Mont.—No, no!

Char.—Kiss me, Montraville, and hold me close to your heart. (She is placed in his arms.) Montraville, why do you weep? Father, as a last request, I ask you to forgive this penitent whom I so dearly love. Forgive him, for my sake.

Mr. T.—As I hope to be forgiven!

Char.—Thank you. Now I can die happy. I am cold. (Shivers.) How dark it has grown—I cannot see you.—Hold me closer. The ship rocks so, and the cold water is dashing over me.

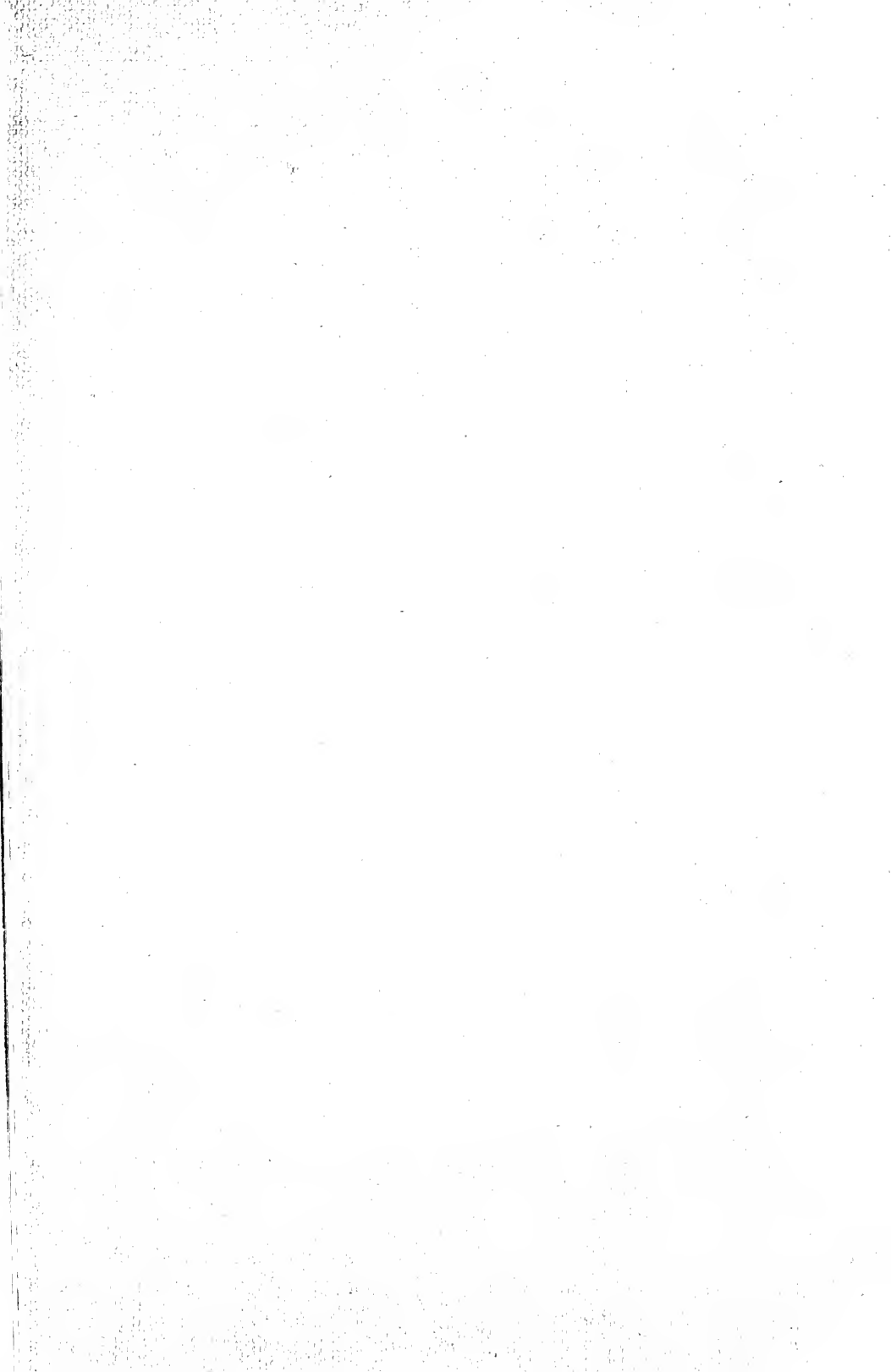
Mont.—My poor white dove—oh, God, spare her to us!

Char.—“Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done—on earth—as it is—in—Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And—forgive—us our trespasses—our tres—(Dies.)

Mr. T.—“As we forgive those who trespass against us.” My child, my angel child! (Falls on his knees by bed. Others grouped around him.)

CURTAIN.





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